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28 September 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: National Intelligence Officer for Strategic Programs
FROM: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT: Study on Soviet Defense Budget for SCC
REFERENCE: Your memo, dtd 22 September 1978, same subject

1. I have a number of problems with this study. To begin with, I don't know how it took so long to do so little. Next, I think we answered the questions very specifically, and in a very narrow context. What the President wants to know is how much of the Soviet military expenditure is allocated to items that have no direct bearing on us. I suggested to someone in the wake of that NSC meeting that this really goes back to a lot of work Les Aspin has done on this subject. I think we could be more helpful to the President if we looked at that and any other ideas we have, as well as the three specific topics the NSC Staff elected to put into this broad directive. I was at the NSC meeting, and I can assure you, that the President's interest isn't limited to these three particular items. Can't we stretch our imaginations a little and do more than answer the mail, or do we really think there are no other symmetries, e.g., Aspin, I believe, talks about a lot of the Soviet military manpower that is allocated to functions we consider civilian. (This can cut both ways because of the MBFR discussions -- but there is no reason not to bring it out.)

2. I made a lot of notes on points I consider unclear. In addition, there certainly is a philosophic difference I have not perceived before between my thinking, and what may be the agreed intelligence of the Community. I have always felt the Soviets have a severe problem of rear area and line of communications security. It has never crossed my mind that they would count on the availability of all of their forces to the front lines as opposed to Eastern Europe. Regardless of philosophic differences here, it seems to me we are doing less service than we could, and should, by simply dismissing this whole issue based on our own assumption of what the Soviet plans are. Surely we could make an alternative set of assumptions, and display the facts so that the President and other decisionmakers can judge for themselves what the impact would be of a Soviet policy of withholding forces in order to control Eastern Europe.

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3. It seems to me the first step is to define Eastern Europe. East Germany and Czechoslovakia are normally a part of Eastern Europe; yet in the event of hostilities with NATO, it would seem unlikely that the Soviets would feel that it was necessary to allocate any of their forces in either East Germany or Western Czechoslovakia specifically to control purposes. There would be so many Soviet forces in both of those areas that no city or town would be more than a few miles from some substantial Soviet force. If we look at Soviet forces stationed in Poland, Eastern Czechoslovakia and Hungary, however, the situation might be quite different. It is our view that the actual forces stationed there are part of Soviet plans for forming even a three-front (?) attack on NATO. It is possible, however, that the Soviets feel they need to retain some forces in these countries to assure their line of communication as well as loyalty of those countries. This makes it possible that Soviet forces moving from Western USSR towards the NATO front could well be called upon to replace the forces stationed in peacetime in these countries. At the same time, the forces for control might be greater or less than those stationed in peacetime. It seems a reasonable assumption that the peacetime forces are a size more on the requirements for possible hostilities on the western front than for control; in short, an outside estimate of the costs of forces equivalent to those stationed in peacetime in Poland, Eastern Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. We could, therefore, show this as an excursion; and after citing the numbers of these forces, leave it to the reader to decide whether he felt that perhaps only half of these forces, or some other fraction, were allocated to control.


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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

25 September 1978

The Honorable Charles Rose, Chairman
Subcommittee on Evaluation
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Rose:

Thanks for your letter of 7 September on the question of compartmented security clearances at the Department of Energy. I am sorry that I have not been back to you before this.

In large measure as a result of your suggestion, I have commenced a program of zero-based reviews of all compartmented security clearances. What this means is going into a given organization and requiring justification from scratch of each clearance presently in existence. Because of your suggestion, we started with one of the components of the Department of Energy, the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory. This was our pilot and test project. I'm happy to let you know that we have completed that zero-based review and reduced our compartmented clearances by 26% (from 184 to 135).

I look on this as a good first cut at the slightly more than 400 compartmented clearances within the Department of Energy. We are now proceeding on to other elements both within the Department of Energy and throughout the rest of the Intelligence Community. The first review within the Central Intelligence Agency, for instance, also resulted in about a 26% reduction.

This is an exciting program, and I am grateful for your stimulus that led to it. With the total number of clearances extant today and the large number of organizations through which they are scattered, we have a big task ahead of us. It will take some time, but I'm confident that we are going to make real progress. On top of this, I can also let you know that I have a group working to review the number of compartmented codewords which we have and how they relate to each other. I believe that we can do much in restructuring the codeword system to give us tighter security, including better control over how many people need these clearances. Overall, I think we are moving in the right direction and I am grateful for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely,

STANSFIELD TURNER

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